

Welcome to **Abington Park MYC**.

The club has a strong programme of competitive events sailed throughout the year

The Club is affiliated to the Model Yachting Association which acts as our 'parent body'. The membership of the MYA comprises affiliated clubs around the country. The MYA is divided into Districts and organises National Championships, District Championships, Series events and individual Open Meetings.

The MYA is also recognised by the International Radio Sailing Association, which facilitates world wide events including World Championships.

Finally, being a member of the MYA provides each club member with third party insurance.

You will never be short of opportunities to sail!

### **Basic Hints and Tips**

The hints and tips below are a summary of helpful points for those new to radio sailing. They are not meant to be exhaustive but should help with the basics. There are a number of good books and leaflets available that give more detail when needed.

#### On the day preparation

It is to be recommended that skippers arrive well in advance of racing to set up their boat and tune the rig for the conditions of the day. There are a few basic tips to establishing a working rig - the rest is up to you!

To begin with, ensure that your mast is vertical side to side and that it is vertical or has a slight rake aft. The main sail should have a slight belly being at its 'fullest' around a third away from the mast. With the main sheet in the close hauled position the boom should be just off the centre line. Then, when looking from the rear of the boat with the sails tilted at an angle the amount of twist in the mainsail can be adjusted using the kicking strap and the downhaul. What you want is for the sail to twist away from the mast increasing as you move upwards. Twist is a 'mythical' setting which will vary depending on wind conditions. Look at the more successful skippers and learn from them and, of course, your own experience. The jib should also have a little belly provided by adjusting the uphaul. The gap or slot between the mainsail and the jib should be around two to three fingers! This will stop the jib back winding the mainsail and will provide power when sailing. The final aspect to check is the issue of balance for the boat when sailing to windward. This is again an issue for individuals but the usual rule of thumb is to have the boat sailing to windward on both tacks with hands off the rudder. The boat should neither fall off the wind nor luff up badly to windward if the boat is balanced. This balance is achieved by looking at the mast rake fore and aft.

If in doubt ask a more experienced skipper, they will be pleased to help!

#### Get on the water early

On arrival at the lake decide which rig to use. You will find that there will usually be a consensus amongst the skippers. If in doubt, go with the majority.

Once on the water try to guess what the course is likely to be if has not yet been established. At the very least take a stab at where the start line might be and the first windward mark. Depending on the wind direction this will tell you what bias the start line will have. Most skippers elect to start on starboard at the right hand end of the line as this is the safest option, but you could be sailing a greater distance and be jammed in

with the rest of the fleet and likely to incur a penalty. Think about your options well in advance.

### Starting tactics

There are a few techniques to getting a good start, but above all be on the front row. You will struggle to win the race if you are late for the start. Stay out of trouble; don't ever try to come in from the side of the line calling for water - there is none and you will be penalised. If there are not many boats in the race try a timed start. Practice a timed start picking a point 15 seconds out so that you hit the line at full speed. If there are a lot of boats, try getting to the front row early and hover just short of the line, accelerating just before the start. Also try looking for a hole and move in, but make sure that you have space to leeward to allow you some room for manoeuvre. Finally always look for clear air and sometimes slowing down and starting a second or so late will work, particularly for that right hand end start. Above all stay out of trouble and keep near the line within the one minute time. Be firm with any boat to windward trying to bear down on you - they can't

### The first beat

On the beat it is vital to keep your air clean. If you are in another boat's dirty wind, tack away as soon as possible. Look for the wind shifts and tack on them. There will develop a favoured side of the course. Don't sail to the extremes (corners) of the course try to stay in the middle sections of the course. When meeting a boat on starboard try not to tack away. It is much better to 'duck' under the stern and keep clear air and also stay in control of your race. How many times do skippers tack away as a matter of instinct?

The next point of reference for you is to find the layline to the windward mark. You want to tack onto the layline about 6 boats length away. This is the time to be aware of the basic rules of: windward boat keep clear, overlaps and water. Read the rules and be aware of your rights and when to give way.

### Reaching and running

Firstly, try to sail the straightest and shortest distance to the next mark. However, there will be windshifts so make use of them by being on the right tack, and gybe when necessary. When coming from behind use your wind shadow to slow down the boat in front, looking to overtake as you increase speed. When in front try to keep your air clear. The trickiest moment on a downwind leg is the approach to the mark, often hurtling headlong towards it in a group of other boats! Again be aware of the rules - call for water early, (talk to your fellow competitors) but try to stay out of trouble! If necessary slow your boat down to dive in to a hole left by the departing boats that have had to sail wide.

### The finish

Always sail towards it, aim for the nearest end, don't sail a longer course than you have to.

### Penalties

Radio sailing is, in the main, a self policing sport. Be aware of the rules and if you infringe them or even think you have - do your penalty turn. On the other hand be aware of your rights and communicate with the other skipper(s) as to what you expect. This should not involve shouting or worse; be firm and sail your race. If there is a dispute you

should protest your fellow skipper and convene a hearing at the end of the race with experienced skippers appointed to give their opinion

### **Basic Rules on Right of Way**

Once again this is not an exhaustive list of the rules but an edited section giving the basics of right of way. Skippers are encouraged to obtain a copy of the rules to be completely informed. However these basic rules should help those new to radio sailing.

#### **1) On opposite tacks**

When boats are on opposite tacks, a port-tack boat shall keep clear of a starboard-tack boat.

#### **2) On the same tack, overlapped**

When boats are on the same tack and overlapped, a windward boat shall keep clear of a leeward boat.

#### **3) On the same tack, not overlapped**

When boats are on the same tack and not overlapped, a boat clear astern shall keep clear of a boat clear ahead.

#### **4) While tacking**

After a boat passes head to wind, she shall keep clear of other boats until she is on a close-hauled course.

#### **5) Avoiding contact**

A boat shall avoid contact with another boat if reasonably possible.

#### **6) Acquiring right of way**

When a boat acquires right of way, she shall initially give the other boat room to keep clear, unless she acquires right of way because of the other boat's actions.

#### **7) Changing course**

When a right-of-way boat changes course, she shall give the other boat room to keep clear.

#### **8) On the same tack, proper course**

If a boat clear astern becomes overlapped within two of her hull lengths to leeward of a boat on the same tack, she shall not sail above her proper course while they remain on the same tack.

#### **9) Rounding marks**

When undertaking this manoeuvre it is important to be aware of the 'zone'. This is a circle four boats length around the mark.

a) When boats are overlapped the outside boat shall give the inside boat mark-room.

b) If boats are overlapped when the first of them reaches the zone, the outside boat at that moment shall thereafter give the inside boat mark-room.

c) When a boat is required to give mark-room, she shall continue to do so even if later an overlap is broken

#### **10) Room to tack at an obstruction**

When approaching an obstruction, a boat sailing close-hauled or above may hail for room to tack and avoid another boat on the same tack.

After a boat hails,

(a) she shall give the hailed boat time to respond;

(b) the hailed boat shall respond either by tacking as soon as possible, or by immediately replying 'You tack' and then giving the hailing boat room to tack and avoid her; and

(c) when the hailed boat responds, the hailing boat shall tack as soon as possible.